

Iowa Division of Latino Affairs

Department of Human Rights

Lucas State Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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La División de Asuntos Latinos

Departamento de

Derechos Humanos

**Edificio Lucas del Estado de
Iowa**

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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Latinos en IOWA



John Paul Chaisson-Cárdenas
Administrator

Our Staff

John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas M.S.W.

John-Paul an immigrant from Guatemala is the newly appointed **Administrator** of the Iowa Division of Latino Affairs in the Department of Human Rights. Before his appointment he was the Training and Technical Assistance at the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice (NRC/FCP) and the Executive Director of the Institute for the Support of Latino/a Families and Communities (ISLFC) at the University of Iowa. John-Paul has developed, coordinated and presented training and technical assistance for educational institutions, governmental agencies, community organizations, businesses, health organizations and social service systems across the United States, Mexico, Canada and Central America. His areas of expertise are Cultural Competence, Community Development and Strength Based Family Centered Practice. John-Paul is also adjunct faculty at the University of Iowa School of Social Work. Other government appointments include member of the Statewide Educational Equity Committee for the Iowa Department of Education, Chair of the Governor's Taskforce on Minority Health and the Disproportionate Minority Confinement Taskforce. John-Paul is also the Chair of the Statewide Latino Conference and a former Diversity Chair of the Iowa Civil Liberties Union state board (American Civil Liberties Union).

JoAnn Lucia Mackey, is the Program Planner for the Division of Latino Affairs. Prior to working for the State of Iowa she was the Homeless Program Project Coordinator at Proteus, Inc. Other experience includes being the Multicultural Program Planner for Domestic Abuse Services in Dallas, Guthrie and Madison Counties and 18 years in the private business sector. She attended St. Mary College in San Antonio, Texas and the Holiday University in Olive Branch, Mississippi. JoAnn is an active member of the Des Moines community and the 2004 Coordinator of the Latino Heritage Festival which is celebrated on the downtown bridges of Des Moines.

Maria Sol Varisco-Santini is from Paraná, Argentina, where she earned a BA in Education in 1998. Sol taught for six years at an elementary level and served as a radio host with "Del Este" FM radio. From 1997 to 2000 she served as the interpreter for American and Greek Athletes in Argentina, New York City and Greece. Currently she is a student at Iowa State University, earning a degree in Spanish Education. In 2003 Sol completed an internship at the Iowa Department of Human Services (Child and Adult Protective Assessment Unit) and now is now serving as an intern with the Division of Latino Affairs.

About the Commission

The Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs ICLA is a state agency that exists to address the needs and concerns of Iowa's Latino citizens. The Commission was established in 1974. It was officially named in 1990 under the Department of Human Rights. The ICLA serves as an advocate for Latinos in Iowa.

The Commission is composed of nine citizens representing different regions of the state. Each person is appointed by the Iowa Senate. The Administrator of the ICLA is also a gubernatorial appointee and confirmed by the Senate. The Director of the Iowa Department of Human Rights serves as ex officio.

The Commissioners meetings are open to the public and accessible to anyone who has an interest in Latino Affairs.

216A.15 Duties.

The commission shall:

- 1.Coordinate, assist, and cooperate with the efforts of state departments and agencies to serve the needs of Latino persons in the fields of education, employment, health, housing, welfare, and recreation.
- 2.Develop, coordinate, and assist other public organizations which serve Latino persons.
- 3.Evaluate existing programs and proposed legislation affecting Latino persons, and propose new programs.
- 4.Stimulate public awareness of the problems of Latino persons by conducting a program of public education and encouraging the governor and the general assembly to develop programs to deal with these problems.
- 5.Conduct training programs for Latino persons to enable them to assume leadership positions on the community level.
- 6.Conduct a survey of the Latino people in Iowa in order to ascertain their needs.
- 7.Work to establish a Latino information center in the state of Iowa.
- 8.Pursuant to section 216A.2, be responsible for budgetary and personnel decisions for the commission and division.
- 9.Maintain information on the qualifications of Spanish language interpreters and maintain and provide a list of those deemed qualified to Iowa courts or administrative agencies, as requested.

Commissioners

Paula Martinez

Carlisle, Iowa

Jason Follett

Cedar Falls, Iowa

Sandra Sanchez-Naert

Granger, IA

Heriberto Godina

Iowa City, IA

Patricia Dawn Taylor

Des Moines, IA

Max Cardenas

Des Moines, IA

Sara Monroy-Huddleston

Storm Lake, IA

Eugenia Hernandez

Iowa City, IA

Ruth White, ex officio

Director

Department of Human Rights

Des Moines, Iowa